

THE
PARALLEL:
OR, A
COLLECTION
OF
EXTRAORDINARY CASES,
Relating to
CONCEALED BIRTHS,
AND
DISPUTED SUCCESSIONS.

Containing,

- I. The History of *Richard Plantagenet*, Son to *Richard III.* who lived and died a Bricklayer.
- II. An Account of Mrs. *Mary Cognot*, declared Heiress to the Queen's Physician by the Parliament of *Paris*, tho' disown'd by Father and Mother.
- III. The surprizing Case of a Nobleman of *Savoy* chang'd at Nurse.
- IV. The intricate Case of the Count *de St. Geran*, educated (tho' unknown) by his Parents, as their Page, and discovered at last to be their Son.
- V. The Restoration of the Baron (*Sutton*) of *Dudley*, deprived of his Honour by the Great Duke of *Northumberland*.

*The injur'd Innocent claims Mankind's Care,
Since in his Wrongs we by Reflection share;
Of boundless Power, if once Injustice boast,
Great are the Guilty, and the Good are lost.*

L O N D O N :

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T H E P A R A L L E L.

THERE is nothing pleases the human Imagination so much as the contemplating strange and wonderful Objects; which is the true Reason that the common sort of People are so very fond of the Marvellous, and so ready to exalt every Transaction, which has any thing in it odd or singular, into a Prodigy. On the other hand, as it is the Characteristick of a solid Judgment, to distinguish Causes through Clouds of Effects, such as pique themselves upon having superior Understandings, take the contrary Road, and will not allow any thing to be wonderful; because that seems to imply the Cause of it to be impenetrable. And thus the Bulk of the World may be divided into two sorts of People, one who really wonder at every thing, and the other who affect to wonder at nothing.

But in respect to this, as well as other things, there is a middle Road, for the few who are content to use the Faculties of the Mind, for the Purposes to which they are proportioned, and who, as they would be ashamed, to give ground for a Suspicion of their being shorter-sighted than
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their

their Neighbours, so they would as readily blush, if detected in an Attempt to impose upon the Judgment of the rest of Mankind, by pretending to see further than human Abilities will permit. It is one thing to be amazed at a piece of Machinery, and another to speak with Reverence of the planetary System. In short, it is Weakness to gape like a Clown at *St. Dunstan's* Clock, and it is as great Weakness to toss up one's Nose at an Orrery, or any other useful Instrument of as noble Contrivance.

We have lately seen a certain Transaction in *Ireland*, become the common Topic of Conversation, on account of some surprising Incidents that attended it; and this I think natural enough: but it seems to me much stranger than the Story, that in most Companies you find People ready to determine upon a Matter of Fact, independent of Evidence, just as their Cast of Mind leads them. Some, because the Story is strange, will needs have it true, which is whimsical enough; but what is still more whimsical, is the opposite Opinion; that because it seems strange, therefore it is altogether incredible. To combat this sort of Partiality, and to enlarge the Prospect of this sort of People, who will needs suspect the Truth of every thing which does not fall immediately within the Light of their Conceptions; I thought it might not be amiss, to exhibit to them a few examples of the same sort, which occurred to me in a private Discourse upon this Subject, and which had such an Effect on the Circle of People to whom they were first told, that I have their Approbation to support me in giving them to the Publick.

As there are abundance of striking Passages in the Life of our famous *Richard* the Third, so his History

History seems to have exercised the Pens of most of our Authors, whether Poets or Politicians, as much or more than that of any of our Kings. The famous *Sir Thomas More*, who was his Cotemporary, or at least lived nearer his Time than any other Writer we have, has thought fit to paint him in the blackest Colours; and his Authority has gone a great way with succeeding Writers. The immortal *Shakespear* has given us a Draft of him in another Style; and I dare say the Poet's Picture is full as like him as that drawn by the Orator. Honest *Buck*, because some of his Ancestors had received Favours from King *Richard*, undertook, out of mere Gratitude, to white-wash him a little, and I know most People think he has erred as much on the other side: For my part, I will not enter far into this matter, because it does not concern me; but shall content myself with observing, that beyond all question, the generality of our Writers have done this Prince great wrong, both as to his Person and his Mind; since the *Scottish* Historians, who were unprejudiced, and therefore most likely to tell the Truth, acknowledge that *Richard* Duke of *Gloucester* was a handsome, courteous, and valiant Prince, of all which Facts they had convenient Opportunities of being fully satisfied.

This *Richard* Duke of *Gloucester*, in the Year 1469, in the eighth Year of the Reign of his Brother *Edward* the Fourth, had an Amour, or for ought I know contracted a private Marriage with some Lady of Quality, for the three Royal Brothers were equally given that way; and towards the latter end of the same Year this Lady brought him a son. His Father took care to have him sent privately to nurse at a Country Village, where he lived till he was seven Years old, taking the

good Woman who brought him up for his Mother, knowing no other Name than that which had been bestowed upon him at the Font, which was the same as his Father's, *Richard*. If any shall enquire what reason there was for keeping him thus in Obscurity, since in those Days, as well as in the present, it was not thought any great Scandal to a young Prince to have a Son born out of Wedlock ; I shall answer, that besides the common Causes that any body may surmise, there are some which from History appear sufficiently cogent, and to the purpose. For the very Year this Child was born, King *Edward* was taken Prisoner, and King *Henry* the Sixth restored ; which certainly was reason enough for the Duke of *Gloucester*, if he had any Affection for his Child, to endeavour at concealing him. For the four next Years all things were involved in Blood and Confusion, and in the fifth the Duke of *Gloucester* married the Princess of *Wales*, Relict of *Edward*, Son to *Henry* the Sixth ; both which Princes are said how truly I know not, to have been killed by the Duke of *Gloucester*'s own Hand : but however that might be, the Marriage is Cause sufficient for keeping the Child in so great Privacy and in an absolute Ignorance of his Birth.

When *Richard Plantagenet* was seven Years old, he was removed from the Care of his Nurse to the House of a *Latin* School-master, near *Lutterworth* in *Leicestershire*, in that very Year when the Succession to the Crown was restored to the House of *York* by Act of Parliament. There the Boy continued eight or nine Years still unacquainted with his Descent, and knowing nothing more, either of his Lineage or Fortune than that once a Quarter a Gentleman, who to

him he was no Relation to him, discharged his Board, and put some Money in his Pocket. In this Situation, his Master, having a Taste for the Classic Writers, took pains to instruct him both in the Historians and Poets ; and *Richard* himself having a Genius for Learning, applied himself so diligently, that before he left School he began to relish, as well as understand them, particularly *Horace* ; which then, and ever after, was his favourite Author, and the chosen Companion of his melancholy Hours.

When he was about fifteen Years old, this Gentleman, who took so much care of him, carried him to a very fine House, where he passed through several stately Apartments, till at last he was introduced to one where a Person richly habited, and adorned with the Ensigns of the Garter, waited for him, asked him abundance of Questions, examined not his Features only, but his Limbs, enquired into the Progress he had made in Learning, spoke kindly to him, and when he went away gave him ten Pieces of Angel Gold, worth ten Shillings a-piece. Some Months after his Guardian came again, and brought with him a Horse, and other Accoutrements, and carried him from the Place where he was at School to the King's Camp near *Leicester*, where he was soon introduced to the Royal Tent of *Richard* the Third, who embraced him with great Tenderness, and told him he was his Son ; adding soon after these remarkable Words : ‘ To-morrow, Child, I must fight for my Crown, and assure yourself if I lose that, I will lose my Life also ; but I hope to preserve both. Do you stand in such a Place, (naming a Spot out of Danger) till the Battle shall be over, and if I am victorious, come to me, I will then own
‘ you,

‘ you, and provide for you. But if I should be
 ‘ so unfortunate as to lose the Battle, then shift
 ‘ as well as you can for yourself; but be sure
 ‘ never to mention your being my Son, for there
 ‘ will be no Mercy shewn to one so nearly related
 ‘ to me.’

Before I proceed further, I must observe that these were two critical Interviews, and agree perfectly well with the History of this King's Reign. The first happened soon after the Death of the Prince of *Wales*, his only Son by the Queen, which was a Circumstance that must naturally inspire the King with greater Tenderneſs for his only surviving Offspring. We may well suppose that this induced him to see the Lad, which he had not done before; but still he never owned him: for which there is another pregnant Reason, the Queen was then living; whereas she was dead before the last Interview, which probably determined his Majesty as much to disclose this Secret, as the Circumstances he was then in. But now, to proceed in my Relation.

Young *Richard Plantagenet* was a Spectator of this decisive Battle from an Eminence near *Leicester* Bridge, till he heard the News there of the King's losing the Field, and being himself mortally wounded. He then made all the haste he could to *London*, where he sold his Horse and fine Clothes; and the better to conceal himself, and at the same time secure an honest Livelihood, he bound himself Apprentice to a Bricklayer. By this prudent Contrivance he escaped all Danger during the suspicious and sanguine Reign of *Henry* the Seventh, who cut off without Mercy, as King *Richard* foresaw, all who were in any degree related to the House of *York*. But as the Remembrance of his Birth filled the

the Breast of *Richard Plantagenet* with many Cares and Apprehensions, he studied Privacy and Retirement as much as possible; and as the Tincture he had received of a liberal Education enabled him to converse with the best Authors, he chose rather to amuse his melancholy Hours with a Book, than to mingle in the Discourse of those with whom he was obliged to work.

He spent in this manner, not only the Days of his Youth, but those of his Manhood, nay even of his old Age; for he was drawing towards fourscore before he found a Person to whom he thought it safe to confide his Secret; and the manner of his divulging it was thus. About the Year 1544, Sir *Thomas Moyle* bought the Estate of *Eastwell* in the County of *Kent*, where he determined to build a new Seat, and by some Recommendation or other, *Richard Plantagenet* was employed there as a Bricklayer. When this House of *Eastwell-Place* was finished, Sir *Thomas Moyle* came down to see it, which might be probably in 1546, and observing that this old Bricklayer, who was then employed about the Out-Houses, retired, whenever he had a Moment's Leisure, with a Book in his Hand, which he read, till being quite spent, he fell asleep: Sir *Thomas* had the Curiosity to take up this Book, while the old Man was fast, and was very much surprized to find it the Works of *Horace*. He questioned him thereupon very strictly, as to his skill in Latin, and finding him better versed in that Language than was in those times usual, he shewed a strong inclination to be acquainted with his Story.

As so many Years were run since the fatal Battel of *Leicester*, and as *Richard Plantagenet* was under no great fears from so mild an Administration

tion as that of *Edward* the Sixth, he at last consented to Sir *Thomas Moyle's* request, and run over ingenuously, the moving Tale of his Misfortunes, in the manner in which I have related it. Sir *Thomas* touched with pity, by so unexpected a Recital of the Miseries endured by a *Plantagenet*, and withal having a deep Respect for the venerable Person of the good old Man, whose grey Hairs seemed so many unquestionable Evidences of his Veracity, comforted him under his hard Lot, and assured him that he should have the use of his House freely, so long as he lived. I am infinitely obliged to you, Sir, replied the unhappy *Richard*; but as you have a large Family, and many Dependants, and as I have been long used to Silence, and Retirement, permit me to spend the last lingering Moments of my Life in that Privacy I love. There is, behind your Out-Houses, a Field where, with your leave, I might build an Apartment, of a single Room, near enough to enjoy your Bounty, which I thankfully accept, and yet, at such a Distance, as may secure that Peace, wherein all my Pleasure lies.

The Knight willingly granted him his Permission, and *Richard* soon raised his Palace of a single Room. There he spent the short Remainder of his Days in quiet, and having passed through a long and innocent Life, expired when he was upwards of Fourscore; and as he had lived upon the Kindness of Sir *Thomas Moyle*, so the same charitable Care attended him to his Grave, and took care to leave an authentic Memorial of his Birth and Misfortunes. The House of *Eastwell-Place*, came afterwards into the Possession of the eldest Branch of the noble Family of *Finch*, and it is to the laudable Cunctosity of the late *Heneage*, Earl of *Winchelsea*, Nobleman

Nobleman whose Virtues threw a Shade on the Age in which he lived, that we owe the several Particulars I have given the Reader. They were frequently the Topics of that good Man's Conversation, who would sometimes shew that Spot in his Park, upon which the House of old-*Richard* stood, and which had been pulled down by the Earl's Father; but I, said that most worthy Lord, had it reached my time, would sooner have pulled down that, pointing to his own House, than this; and as a Testimony of the Truth of this remarkable History, he was wont to produce the following Entry in the Register of the Parish-Church of *Eastwell*.

Anno Domini 1550.

RYCHARD PLANTAGENET was buried the twenty-second Day of December Anno ut supra.

It does not appear, by the Register, whether he was buried in the Church, or in the Church-Yard; neither is his Age taken notice of, but that may be easily, and certainly collected, as well from Circumstances, as from the Date assigned by himself, for the time of his Birth. He was sixteen Years old, or thereabouts, when King *Richard* fell at the Battel of *Leicester*; now that Battle was fought upon the 22d of *August* 1485, and from thence to 1550 is sixty-five Years, consequently *Richard Plantagenet* was Four-score and One. Such was the Life, and such the Death of a Person, who according to the ordinary Course of things, should have led quite a different Life, which perhaps, might have conducted him to a Death of a different kind. None of our Historians, none of our Writers of secret

History ever heard a Word of this Son of *Richard* the Third, but after the Death of the Prince of *Wales*, set him down Childless; which they might well do, since the King, himself, declared *John de la Poole*, Earl of *Suffolk*, Heir to the Crown. I am very sensible that some Objections may be made to this History, such as that it depends entirely upon the Credit of this Man himself, and is not fortified by any concurrent Testimony.

In order to obviate this Objection, I must desire the Reader to consider that, how strange soever this Relation may appear, there is still nothing in it either absurd, or impossible. If therefore the thing might happen, and if it had so happened, we could have had no other Evidence than that of *Richard* himself. I do not see upon what Foundation the Objection can rest, since we have plainly that sort of Evidence which the Case could only admit. But further still, this Declaration was not voluntarily made, nor in the Flower of the Man's Age, nor with any View to Interest, but in the Decline of his Life, by a Person, the Innocency of whose Manners will not suffer us to suspect that he should form a design of going out of the World with a Lye in his Mouth. Add to all this, another Circumstance: Sir *Thomas Moyle* must either have given implicit Credit to what this Man told him, which is the strongest Proof of his considering him as a Person incapable of Deceit, or by enquiring into the Fact, he must by concurrent Circumstances be satisfied as to the Truth of it; otherwise he would never have suffered such an Entry to be made in the Register of his Parish Church: in either Case we have concurrent Evidence.

But if it be strange, that a Great Prince should leave behind him a Son, without recommending him to his Friends, or affording him any specific Testimony of his Birth; if it be no less strange, that the Son of a King should have so little Ambition as to put himself Apprentice to a Bricklayer, and be content to pass all his Days in so servile an Employ; and if it be still more unlikely, that though the Tradition of this be strong in that part of *Kent*, yet it should not, till very lately, be brought to publick Notice; there are many Facts of a nature, not much wide of this, which have still more surprizing Circumstances attending them than these. Let us then proceed to consider another extraordinary History, in which we shall find a young Woman claiming to be the Daughter of a Physician to Queen *Margaret of France*, though disavowed both by Father and Mother, and by a long and laboured Process at Law declared so to be by one of the most discerning, as well as most august Judicatories in *Europe*. The Fact must appear equally curious and surprizing, and therefore I have no reason to doubt that the Reader will afford it as much Attention as it deserves.

Joachim Cognot, Doctor in Physick, at the Age of Sixty, being then settled at a Place called *Bar-sur-Seine*, married there one *Mary Nassier*, a Woman of a pretty good Family, about the Age of twenty-nine. This Marriage was celebrated in the Year 1590, and the Parties lived together some Years, as comfortably as the Disproportion of their Ages would permit. In this space of time they had several Children, all of whom died in their Infancy, except *Claudius Cognot*, their only Son, and of him they were both extremely fond. In the Year 1597, Dr. *Cognot*

thought fit to remove to *Fontenay le Comte* in *Poitou*, leaving his Wife behind him. It does not appear what was the particular Motive which induced him to act in this manner; but whatever it was, as Wives are not easily shaken off, the good Woman thought fit to follow him. This was in the latter End of the Year 1598; and on the fourth of *July* 1599, she was brought to bed of a Daughter, at seven Months, as she affirmed. The Doctor however presuming on the Skill he had in his own Profession, and observing the little Girl to be a lively strong Child, conceived a notion in his Pate that his Wife must have gone her full Time; from whence, according to his Logick, it was clear that she had made bold to borrow this Daughter of hers from some other Person than himself.

He did not however make any noise about the matter, but suffered the Child to be baptized in his Name, and invited Persons of his Acquaintance to be Gossips. He afterwards put out the Child to nurse, and never testified any sort of Suspicion to any of his Acquaintance. In 1601, he removed to *Paris*, where he fell into great Practice, and derived from thence Hopes that he should be able to leave his Son a considerable Fortune. As this was the great Object of his Thoughts, he in 1602, determined to rid himself for ever of his Wife's Daughter, as he conceived it to be, and with this View sent a poor Man to fetch the Child from Nurse, and to meet him at an Inn in one of the Suburbs of *Paris* most distant from that in which he lived. The Doctor was waiting for it at the appointed Time; and as soon as he had got the Child into his hands, he made him carry her to the House of one *John Boutet*, a Locksmith, with whose Wife he agreed

agreed for the Child's Board, at the rate of four Livres, which at that time were worth about 6s. 8d. of our Money a Month; and having paid her for one Month down, went away without ever telling them who he was, or how the Child was related to him; he only said, that her Name was *Mary*, that she was three Years old, and gave them a Piece of green Serge to clothe her. He made his Wife privy to this whole Affair, who either from a passionate Fondness for her Son, or out of fear of her Husband, came into this black Contrivance of abandoning her helpless Child to the Mercy of Strangers. One can scarce conceive a stranger Scheme than this, considering the Fondness that Women naturally have for their Children, and that Mrs. *Cognot* was a Woman of Family, and of great good Sense, and at the same time a very tender Mother to her Son. But thus it is, that when once the Mind is so far corrupted as to digress from the Paths of Virtue, Habit soon gets the better both of Principle and Nature, and renders People much more wicked than at the Beginning; and, while they have still some Remains of Goodness, they can conceive it possible for themselves to be.

After ten or twelve Months rolling this Event in her Mind, Mrs. *Cognot*, surprized by an unusual Fit of Tendernefs, resolved to afford herself for once the Satisfaction of looking upon this daughter, notwithstanding the Dangers she must naturally apprehend would attend such an Interview. She went accordingly, and having enquired of the Nurse, whether she had not such a Child left with her at such a time, she said she had, and the Girl was produced to her: the Wife of *Boutet* no sooner saw the Lady than she fancied a Voice whispered in her Ear,

Ear, *this is the Child's Mother.* As she was a plain downright Woman, she told it immediately to Mrs. *Cognot*, who denied it indeed; but at the same time embraced the Child so affectionately, and wept over her so heartily, that the Nurse was effectually confirmed in her Suspicion. When she took her leave, she kissed the Child, and gave her five Livres. When Mrs. *Cognot* reflected afterwards on her own Behaviour, she resolved never more to risk a thing of this nature, and so the poor Infant was left for some Years, without any body's making the smallest Enquiry about her.

This brings the thing as low as the Year 1609, when the Family where she boarded was reduced to such Necessity, that they were not able to subsist her any longer; and therefore her Nurse though much against her Will, put her into the Hospital of the Trinity, where, however, she visited her regularly, and gave her all the Assistance she could. Providence in the mean time punished the Barbarity of her unnatural Parents by depriving of them of that Son, for whose sake they had sacrificed their Daughter. One would have imagined that this Circumstance would have awakened the Tenderness of her Mother at least; but it had a quite contrary Effect. She considered that her Husband, from being in low Circumstances, was become, through great Practice, and being the Queen's Physician, a Man of Wealth, of which, if she once became Mistress, she might have an Opportunity of making herself more agreeably: in pursuance of which Scheme, she drew him, with some difficulty, to consent to what is common enough in *France*, a kind of mutual Deed of Gift, which the Survivor is entitled to the whole

fects, under such Restrictions as are mentioned in such Deeds.

Though the poor Woman who had brought up *Mary Cognot*, had never seen her Father but once, yet as he was a little homely black Man, with very strong Features, she remembered him exactly; and having some Business at the end of the Town where he lived, she recollected him at first sight, though she saw him only passing in the Street, and this at the Distance of fourteen Years. At the time this Accident happened, she was talking to one Mrs. *Blondel* the Wife of a Basket-maker, who, upon her enquiring, told her that he was a Physician in the Neighbourhood, and shewed her the House where he lived. She took care to have him sent for that very Afternoon to visit a Nun, who was sick, in a Monastery, in her Neighbourhood; and just as he came out of the Gate of the Convent, she stepped up to him, and asked him whether he did not remember leaving with her a little Girl, between thirteen and fourteen Years ago? what he intended to do with her? and whether he did not think it high time she should be paid for her Board? The Doctor was too much confounded to deny the thing, and therefore after recollecting himself a little, he pretended the Child was the Daughter of the Man who brought her to her House, and whom he had sent to fetch her from Nurse. He then asked where the Child was, and how she did? The Woman answered, that she had been lately in an Hospital, but that she was then Servant to a Writing-Master, and ill of a Fever; upon this, the Doctor took her Direction, and went twice to see her.

The Locksmith, and his Wife, having once learned the way to the Doctor's House, were not

not slow in paying him a Visit; and he having communicated the Matter to his Wife, it revived some Sparks of natural Affection in her Bosom, which induced her to advise her Husband to take the young Woman home, as the best Means to end all Disputes. To this, without much difficulty, the Doctor agreed; and in consequence of his Orders, *Mary Cognot* was brought, by the Woman who had nursed her, to the Doctor's House, where Mrs. *Cognot* no sooner saw her, than pretending to take her for a Servant, who came to be hired, she asked her what she could do, and what she must give her. The Nurse cut short these Questions, by saying, I have not brought this young Woman here to bargain for Wages, but to deliver her up to the Person from whom I received her. When the Girl was once fairly fixed, the Woman made them another Visit, and demanded the Money, due to them, for her Board; upon which the Doctor, to rid himself of so troublesome an Affair, spoke a little abruptly, which had the Effect he might reasonably have expected from it, viz. a legal Summons to appear before the Bailiff of *St. Germain's*.

This Affair puzzled the Doctor excessively; he saw the Consequences must necessarily attend the examining circumstantially into his Proceedings; and believing that nothing could put so short an end to his Perplexities, as compromising the Matter, he immediately proposed it to the Locksmith, and his Wife, who willingly accepted it: whereupon the Doctor, to guaranty himself from any further Disputes, about so tender a Point, caused a kind of general Release, containing a Specification of the Circumstances attending the Matter, to be drawn up and signed by the

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contrary to their own Resolutions, and to betray by their Behaviour the Falshood of their Assertions; thereby making way for the full Discovery of what, with all the Art and Care imaginable, they study to conceal. Such was the Course of Life this Family led, for the space of four Years; in which time, the Father respected his Daughter without loving her, while the Mother loved her without being able to determine to do her Justice at the Expence of her Character, and private Views. The young Woman all the time suspected that she was in Truth their Child, though incapable of reconciling the visible Contradictions in their Conduct. At last, in the Year 1625 Doctor *Cognot* died at the Age of eighty-six, and as he had reserved a Power of leaving a certain Sum by Will, he bequeathed the Sum of 600 Livres to *Mary Croissant*, his Servant, as a Reward for her inviolable Fidelity; the Bulk of his Estate passing by the before-mentioned Deed to his Widow.

The old Doctor thus out of the way, the Widow *Cognot* continued to live in the same manner with the young Woman, as before, till she found a proper Match for her; which was one *Augustus de Seine*, a Man in tolerable Circumstances, and likely to make her a good Husband. She gave her a small Fortune, and in the Contract of Marriage, thought fit to stile her her God-Daughter. Such strange Contrivances did this Woman fall upon, in order to reconcile her Avarice to her Affection; for as was afterwards observed, by one of the Members of the Parliament, her Tenderness, her Indulgence, her Beneficence, went too far for a Woman who was not a Mother, and not far enough for one who was truly such: the were Evidences of Guilt, not Testimonies of Generosity

nerosity; inasmuch as they were forc'd from her by the Softness of her natural Temper, and did not spring from any right Principle of Mind. But it is now time for us to see how this Affair came to be unravelled.

Mary Cognot being one Day employed by the Widow, to look over the old Doctor's Papers, found amongst them a Letter, under her Mother's own Hand, dated in the Year 1601, that is, two Years after her Birth. In this Letter were the following Expressions: "I have nothing more
" to add, but to recommend to you our Children,
" pray take care of little *Mary*, go and see her frequently, I am making for her what Linen she
" wants." *Mary Cognot*, who had long suspected her Relation to the Family, was going to slip the Letter into her Pocket, but her Mother demanded it hastily from her, and would not suffer her to put it up. You may, said the young Woman, do what you will with the Letter, but it has sufficiently enlightened me, I am certainly that *Mary*, and why should I therefore any longer doubt that I ought to be provided for as my Father's Daughter? The Widow, notwithstanding all her Entreaties, took the Letter from her, but softened by her Prayers, and Tears, and withal feeling the Anguish of her own Conscience, she at last, owned to her that she was her Mother; but told her at the same time, that as she had never owned it before, she would still deny it to the World; adding, that she had advised with her Confessor, who had told her she might lawfully do it, provided she took care that her Daughter did not want, and left her what was her Due, when she came to die. By this Contrivance, she thought to stop her Daughter's Mouth; and she did it effectually

till she thought fit to marry the *Sieur Nicholas Coquant*, a Person who had many Children, and little or nothing to give them; but then perceiving all her Mother's Cares center in a new Family, and being pressed to it by her Husband, she resolved to commence a Suit, and executed her Design soon after, by summoning her Mother before the Bailiff of *St. Germain's*, who made her undergo a very strict Examination; in which, after confessing more than enough, to make the Truth evident, she at the Conclusion, denied upon her Oath, that the young Woman was her Child; which however, had so little Weight with the Judge, that he decreed the direct contrary; ordered her to receive and acknowledge her Daughter, and to pay a small Fine for what she had already done to her Prejudice, with which however she refused to comply.

The Decree was made on the 11th of *May* 1629, and from it she appealed to the Parliament of *Paris*, where the Cause was heard with great Solemnity. All the Proofs were so strong, that even the learned Lawyers, who were employed by *Mrs. Coquant* scarce knew what to say in her Defence; they hung however, very hard upon *Dr. Cognot's* last Will and Testament, by which he had left the Person, who now claim'd to be his Daughter, a Legacy of 600 Livres, by the Name of his Servant *Mary Croissant*. They exaggerated mightily the Credit due to a Man's Act upon his Death-Bed, and that it was by no means probable, a Man of his Wisdom and Sagacity, would go out of the World with a Lye in his Mouth, and do that in the last Moments of his Life, which could scarce be expected from the wickedest Man in the World, when the farthest removed from the Fear of Dying.

On

On the other side it was said, that in Reality this Will proved nothing, that whatever Wisdom and Sagacity the Man, who made it, might have in other things, yet in this he was plainly light-headed. He had entertained, for any thing that appeared, an idle Conceit, that he was not the Father of this Child; and that proceeding as he did upon this Notion, all their Evidence was thrown away in endeavouring to give the last Act of such a Man the Weight and Authority of a dying Act. If from any secret Views, a Father who believed himself such, could be drawn to disown his Child, it was very natural to expect that he should repent, and confess his Crime upon his Death-bed; but where the contrary of this appeared, where a Man abandoned and disowned his Child, because he thought her not so, no such thing could possibly be expected. The famous Mr. *Le Maitre*, one of the ablest Advocates in *France*, struck out, upon this Occasion, a very happy Comparison: There is, said he, the same Difference between these Cases, as between a Libertine and a Heretick; when they come to die, the former naturally owns and deplores his Errors, because he always knew them to be such; the latter persists in his, from a firm Opinion that he adheres to the Truth: in short, the one has his Will corrupted, and the other is distracted in his Imagination.

The Court took notice of the Justice of this Maxim in the Law, *Pater est quem Nuptiæ demonstrant*. They shewed, that not only the Peace of Families, but the publick quiet depended upon it. They observed, that if any Countenance were given to such idle Conjectures, as those upon which Dr. *Cognot* had founded his Proceedings, it would induce such Confusions as could never be

be endured. They observed, that the original Register of Baptism exactly coincided with the other Proofs exhibited by *Mary Cognot*, and that an Attempt, made by her Mother, to procure a false Entry to be made in the Register of the Hospital of the Trinity, proved the Fact more plainly. They likewise observed, that the Release so much insisted upon, was rather a Proof that Dr. *Cognot* endeavoured to fortify himself against the breaking out of this Truth, than any Discredit to it; because no probable Reason could be assign'd for his paying 400 Livres to the Persons who had brought up this Child, if it had not been as *Mary Cognot* stated it, that he had himself put her into their Hands; upon which Reasons, and upon a view of the Evidence offered on both sides, the Parliament decreed,

That the Deed of Gift dated 23d *March* 1623, should be Null and Void, as also all the Papers, Acts, and Contracts, wherein *Mary Cognot* was styled *Mary Croissant*; and declared *Mary Cognot*, the Daughter of the late *Joachim Cognot*, and *Mary Nassier*, who were her Father and Mother. They likewise directed the said last mentioned *Mary*, to receive and treat as her Daughter, the other *Mary*, and the said *Mary Cognot* to pay her the Obedience of a Daughter: They also restored her the whole Estate of Dr. *Joachim Cognot* her Father, and forasmuch as the Widow of *Cognot*, in order to interest the Relations of the Family in this Suit, had paid over 2700 Livres two Years before, to the collateral Heirs of her Husband, they ordered her to pay that Sum to her Daughter with Interest; saving however, to her a Right of recovering the 2700 Livres without Interest from the Heirs; for they neither thought it just the Daughter should lose the In-
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terest, or that the Heirs should pay it, who had no hand in the Fraud. This Decree was made December 8. 1634,

I have been the longer upon this Story, because the Facts are extremely well supported, and it is of great Authority in the *French* Law Books: The Care that is taken to preserve all the Reports that have any thing in them, either singular in Fact, or in Law, enabled a Gentleman of the Long Robe in *France* to make, not long ago, a Collection of curious Cases, which have swelled seventeen or eighteen Volumes, and very probably had not stopped there, if the Author had not been interrupted by Death in the Course of his Work. I shall speedily produce a very extraordinary Case from that Collection, but in the mean time I shall take notice of an Affair that happened not long ago in *Savoy*, and which has been recorded by several Authors, though none of them have thought fit to mention Names; for what reason I cannot imagine, since the Reader will perceive by the Story, that there is nothing in it dishonourable to any body. But there are Countries, where People are restrained from mentioning Families of Distinction, from a Notion that it is doing them an Injury to expose their Actions to the Censure, and their Names to be handed about by the Tongues of the Vulgar. Low and despicable Pride! as if Truth or Virtue could suffer by any Examination, or as if there could be Nobility independent of these! But we must take things as they are; the Story then, in few Words, was this:

A Nobleman of that Country had a Son by his Lady, who was to be the Heir of a noble Family and large Estate. There lived in the Neighbourhood of his Castle, a Woman who had

had been his Mother's Servant, and was now married to a Farmer, who was a Tenant of his. This Woman happened to be brought to bed about the same time with the Lady, and therefore to her Care, as a Nurse, the Son and Heir of this great Family was committed. It was expected that the Farmer's Wife should put out her own Son to nurse; but her Kindness for her Son, or rather her Avarice and Ambition, prompted her to the basest Breach of Trust that ever was committed. She not only suckled both the Children privately, but imposed her own Son upon her Lord and Lady for theirs. The Cheat was not discovered while they lived, and on their Decease the Nurse's Son took his supposed Father's Title, and entered quietly into the Possession of the Estate, under the Guardianship however of some Persons of Distinction, who were the nearest Relations.

This young Gentleman travelling to a Town in the Neighbourhood, met there with his Nurse's Son, whom he took into his Service, and being extremely pleased with his Company, very soon admitted him to his Table, treating him in every respect as his Companion and his Friend. By Consent of the Guardians they were brought up together, had the same Masters in every Science, read the same Authors, and were sent to the same College; where the true Son of the Nobleman distinguished himself, by making a much greater Progress in every kind of Learning, which his Lord was so far from seeing with the least Uneasiness or Regret, that on the contrary, he was always the first to acknowledge and applaud the Proficiency of him, whom he considered in no other light than as his Servant. When they had spent the usual Time at the University

versity, they returned into the Country, and dwelt there some time in the same friendly manner, both being equally Masters; and the only Distinction that remained, consisted in the Complaisance and Submission, which he who considered himself as a Servant shewed to him from whom all his good Fortune was derived.

All the Noblemen and Gentry of the Country admired the Generosity of the one, and the Gratitude of the other, when a very unlooked-for Accident changed the Scene. One day when they were at Table together in the Castle, a Servant came and whispered the supposed Lord, that his Nurse was at the point of Death, and most earnestly desired to speak with him. He rose immediately, and went to her, without so much as speaking to his Friend. As soon as he came to the Bed-side of the dying Woman, she threw her Arms about his Neck, and embracing him tenderly, said, "My Son, my Confessor has charged me to reveal to you a Secret, which hitherto I never disclosed, even to your Father. The young Man to whom you have been so kind is the true Son of my Lord, and you are mine; this I disclose to make my Peace with God, I have not a Moment to live, you therefore cannot doubt the Truth of what I say." As she breathed these Words she expired in his Arms; upon which he called, as soon as he was able, those who had retired out of the Room when he entered it, and having given Directions for her Funeral retired, and soon after returned to the Castle, where he acquainted his Friend with the News of his Mother's Death; but without taking the least notice of the important Secret, which with her last Breath she disclosed to him.

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Things remained in this Situation for some Months, until the young Man had in some measure wore off his Concern for his Mother's Death, and the other had recovered his usual Serenity, which, notwithstanding his Silence, had been very much discomposed by this unforeseen Accident. He then thought it high time to do Justice; and therefore, after they had spent an Evening very chearfully together, he related the Story with all its Circumstances, in a very easy and natural manner, as a thing he had read; and when he had ended it, turned briskly about to his Companion: "Tell me, says he, what you would have done, if you had been the Lord's Son in such a Situation." "I would, replied the other very frankly, have divided the Estate with my Friend, and have shewn him by such an Act of Justice, that I had merited the Favours he had bestowed, while Fortune put Favours in his power." "I am obliged to you, added the other, for your Decision, my Happiness depends upon it, the Case is your own: You are in reality what hitherto I have only seemed to be; I am willing to put you in possession of the Estate, and am ready to give the Evidence which the Law may require to support your Title." This extraordinary Compromise was afterwards ratified by the supreme Council, and they spent the remainder of their days in a Friendship as sincere as that by which the first Period of their Life was distinguished.

If the Circumstances of these Relations do not seem to carry in them as much of the Wonderful, as there appears to be in the Affair which gave rise to this Discourse, I proceed to another Instance, which I believe will be thought to come closer; H

closer ; and which, as I before hinted, is taken from a large Collection. It will shew, that sometimes tho' Persons of distinguished Birth and Breeding, by giving a loose to their Passions, become capable even of blacker Actions than are ever committed by meaner People. To say the truth, there is a Reach and a Capacity necessary for such Contrivances, that exceed the Faculties of vulgar Minds, and require a Compass of Thought, which must be the Result of Genius and Education misapplied, or of a long Converse with the World, and a perfect Acquaintance with the Arts necessary for the carrying on such Practices. This Story is in every respect singular, it concerns a Family, distinguished not only by an hereditary Nobility, but by a Succession of great and worthy Men, whose Virtues reflected Lustre on the Titles derived to them by their Descent. It is supported by such Authorities as will not suffer us to entertain any Doubts about it ; and withal, is so recent, that it is impossible for us to imagine that any of these Authorities are either false or fictitious. It would be superfluous perhaps for me to add, that the Difference of Countries makes none in facts ; what happens in one place may happen in another, and though there may be great variety in the Laws of several Nations, yet the Principles of Justice and Equity are the same in every Country ; nor is there any very great difference with respect to the Rule of Evidence ; what serves to demonstrate Truth in one place, will render it manifest also in another ; so that if we suppose the Scene shifted, what appeared to be just and right in *France*, must seem also agreeable to Justice, if the like Transactions had happened there. But to quit Argument and Reflection, in order to return to the easier Task of Narrative, closer History I am to give you runs thus :

The House of *Guiche* is one of the most famous in *France*; from whence, amongst other illustrious Persons, proceeded the Marshal de *St. Geran*, who married *Anne de Tournon*, by whom he had a Son *Claudius de la Guiche*, and a Daughter, who married the Marquis de *Bouille*. After the Decease of his first Wife, he married the Widow of the Count de *Longaunay*, who by her first Husband had an only Daughter, called *Susanna*. In order to unite the Families more closely, the Marshal consented to the Marriage of his only Son with his Wife's only Daughter, which was celebrated on the 17th of *February*, 1619. the young Gentleman being then about eighteen, and the Lady in her fifteenth Year; and therefore he was sent on his Travels to *Italy*, from whence he returned in 1621. About ten Years after the Marshal de *St. Geran* died, without seeing any Issue of his Son's Marriage. The young Count de *St. Geran* succeeded his Father in his Government, and was likewise made Knight of the King's Orders; in short, his Happiness was as compleat as this World could make it; this only excepted, that he had no Child to inherit his Honours and his Fortune. Under this Evil he laboured twenty Years, though the Countess made in that time many Pilgrimages, and took every other Method to obtain an Heir, that became a Woman of true Piety and strict Honour.

At last, in the Year 1640, towards the End of the Month of *November*, the Countess de *St. Geran* set out with her Husband for *Paris*, and soon after her Arrival there declared herself with Child. She had a Fall in her seventh Month, which mightily alarmed the Family, and brought twenty Ladies of Distinction to visit her.

who all separately laid their Hands on the Countess's Belly, and felt the Child stir. A Physician and Midwife were taken into the House, and the Countess's Mother sent for, all of whom were sensible of her being with Child; and yet at the end of two Months they saw all these Symptoms cease, and no Child appear. The Case was wonderful, the Women were struck with it; but the learned Doctors, whose Skill and Experience never permit them to be surprized, declared it to be a false Conception, and that the Notions of the Ladies ought to be ascribed to Fancy. But, with Submission to the great Wisdom of the Faculty, we will proceed to explain the true Causes of this odd Event, which escaped the Penetration of these worthy Gentlemen; because, strictly speaking, they were not Physical Causes.

We have already observed that the Count *de St. Geran* had a Sister, who married the Marquis *de Bouille*; this Gentleman had a great many Failings, which made him extremely disagreeable to his young Wife; particularly an incurable Malady, called Seventy-three: The Marchioness, who was of a sprightly Temper, and who found her Husband inclined to lay her under some Restraints, thought fit to divorce herself, without the Forms, and retired to her Brother's, where she was at the Time this Accident happen'd. It fell out unluckily enough for the Family, that they had at the same time another Refugee in the House, who was also a Relation; this was the Marquis *de St. Maixant*, against whom Warrants had been issued for endeavouring to strangle his own Wife, in order to marry a Lady, whose Husband was to be removed by some such Method. This Marquis, though a
very

very bad Man, was in every respect the most plausible, that perhaps was ever seen. He had a very fine Person, was in the Flower of his Age, and had all the Accomplishments that could be wished for in a Man of Quality. The Marquis, and his Cousin the Marchioness, became very well acquainted, and formed a Plot against the yet unborn Infant, which they foresaw would be the sole Heir of an Estate, of which the Marchioness must otherwise have a large Share. They corrupted the Steward, the Midwife, and two of the Countess's Women. On the 16th of *August*, 1641, the Countess fell in Labour; and, as is usual in such cases, the nearest Relations of the Family were all in the Room. The Countess had a long and difficult Time, which gave the Marchioness *de Bouille* an Opportunity of declaring, that, as the Weather was hot, it was dangerous for the Countess to have so many People about her; and that therefore it would be proper for all, who were not absolutely necessary, to retire, which they did without the least Suspicion, and left the poor Lady in the Hands of the Conspirators.

The first thing they did, was to give her by the Hand of the Midwife, under the Notion of a Cordial, a very strong Opiate, which threw her into a profound Sleep that lasted till the next Day; and in this Space she was delivered, without her Knowledge, of a Son. The Child was immediately transferred to the Steward's Room, where the Midwife tied the Navel; and immediately after, as if she had recollected her self, broke his Skull, intending to have put the poor Infant out of the World, if he had not instantly been snatched out of her murdering Hands; the Marks of which he bore to his dying Day. It

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was the Steward who saved his Life by the express Orders of the Marquis *de Maixant*; who doubting whether the Marchioness *de Bouille* would make good her Promise, of marrying him, upon the Death of her Husband; thought proper to secure this Child as a Pledge for the Performance of her Contract. As soon as he had it, the Steward put the Child in a Basket, and mounting a fleet Horse, slipt through the Park; and having got the Child suckled, within a League of the Castle of *St. Geran*, he carried it to the Village of *Descoutoux*, near a Country-Seat belonging to the Marchioness *de Bouille*, where he put it to Nurse; but there he could not keep it above a Week; because the Woman refused to give Suck to a Child, the Father and Mother of which, were concealed; and which had besides, such a Wound in the Head: and the Noise she made about it, hindered them from getting any other Nurse in that Part of the World. All these, with many other little Circumstances, were fully proved, when the Matter came to be judicially enquired into. But it is now time to return to the Countess in her distressed Circumstances.

As soon as she came to her self, the next Day, and opened her Eyes, she asked what was become of her Child; for feeling her self lighter, and in a state she had never experienced before, she was very sensible that she was delivered. They assured her she was not, and she as firmly maintained that she was; the Midwife to quiet her declared, that before the Day was over, she would be certainly delivered; and that if she had any skill in her Business, she durst from the preceding Signs assure her, that it would be a Son. This pacified her Mother and her Husband; but for the Countess, she remained still in the same

same Tone. The Day following, the Midwife said that the New-Moon hindered her being brought to bed, and that she could not be delivered till it was in the wane. This story would never have passed, if unluckily the Lady's Mother had not declared, that once when she thought herself at her full time, and she had the strongest Signs of Labour; her Pains notwithstanding went off, and she was not delivered till six Weeks after. The Doctors were clear that such a thing might have happened; the Conspirators were very much surprized, and nothing could have convinced them that such a thing was possible, but the Case of the Countess's Mother; that indeed was decisive; and they could not doubt that her Daughter had met with the same Misfortune. The poor Lady, in her Bed, never varied in her Story; she constantly insisted she was delivered, and persisted steadily in desiring to see her Child.

The Midwife, who had not either Bowels or Conscience, resolved since the Child had escaped her, to secure her own Safety, by destroying the Mother. With this View, she told the Family, after the Moon in the last Quarter had been just as cross as in the first, that the Child lay very high, and that it was necessary the Countess should undergo some fatiguing Exercise to bring it down. In consequence of this fine Advice, the poor Lady, at a Fortnight's end, was put into a Coach and driven over a Causeway; which Operation, but for the Strength of her Constitution, had certainly dismissed her to the Land of everlasting Rest: at her Return they put her to Bed, where she remained very silent and quiet, and spoke not a word of her Child. This did not at all proceed from an Alteration in her Opinion; she believed, or at least

speak more accurately, she knew that she had
 been delivered; but finding her Mother, her
 Husband, her Sisters, for her Mother had two
 Daughters by her second Marriage, all governed
 by the Learned in their Notions of this Matter; she
 resolved to submit patiently, and to resign her
 self and her Child into the Hands of Providence.
 In consequence of this Resolution, she permitted
 quietly such Applications as the good Midwife
 thought proper, in order to drive back her Milk,
 and by degrees the whole Family grew quiet,
 the Count was satisfied, and nobody but the
 poor Lady lamented in secret the Loss of her
 Child.

The Steward in the mean time committed the
 Infant to a Sister-in-law of his, one *Mary Pigoreau*,
 who took care to get it baptized by the Name
 of *Bernard* on the seventh of *March* 1642, at the
 Church of *St. John* in the *Greve*, without men-
 tion of its Parents; but at home she made it pass for
 her Son *Henry*, who died soon after it was born; and
 was in reality three Years older than the young
 Count. When he was put into her Hands, a Sum
 of Money was deposited for its Maintenance with a
 Grocer at *Paris*; in about two Years and a half
 this Money, which was 2000 Livres, was all
 wasted away; and then Mrs. *Pigoreau* carried
 the Child to the Steward, who being its Uncle,
 she said should maintain it. The Man had five
 Children of his own, and though he was in the
 utmost Favour with his Lord and Lady, yet he
 found it very difficult to obtain their leave to
 bring it to the House; and indeed his own Wife,
 who was entirely out of the Secret, opposed it
 heartily; but at last, the Steward carried his Point,
 and the Child was actually brought to the House
 of the Count de *St. Geran*, where it remained some
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time before it was seen either by the Count or Countess. At last, when the Family came to go into the Country, Orders were given to put the Child into the second Coach; but the Countess stepping into her own, seeing it, cried out, what a beautiful Boy! bring him hither, he shall go in my Lap: The Child accordingly was carried down in their own Coach.

The Count and Countess had not the least Suspicion that this little Boy was any other than the Nephew of their Steward; and yet both of them had the warmest Affection for it, and the Countess would often sigh to her self, and say, Ah my poor Child that I fancy I brought into the World, would he not have been of the same Age? and might he not have been as beautiful a Child as this? The Marquis *de St. Maixant*, and the Marchioness *de Bouille* were not a little disturbed at seeing the Heir of the Family thus in the Hands of his Father and Mother. The Steward on the other hand, being a frequent Witness of the Warmth and Tenderneſs of their Careſſes, could not help letting some odd Expreſſions eſcape him. For example, he ſaid that he had the Life and Honour of the Marchioness *de Bouille* in his Hands; that he wondered ſhe did not tremble whenever ſhe ſaw him. He obſerved to ſome of the Servants, that the Count and Countess were very fond of the Child, but that they would be ſtill fonder of him if they knew all. He went ſo far as to conſult a Prieſt, to whom he put this Caſe of Conſcience, *viz.* Whether a Man who was concerned in ſuppreſſing and concealing the Heir of a great Family, might cancel that Offence, by reſtoring the Child to its Parents without diſcovering him? The Answer he received, contributed very little to the ſettling his Mind.

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The Marquis and Marchioness having conferred together, on the dangerous State of their Affairs, and the Risk they run from this Man's Indiscretion, resolved to poison him out of the way, which wicked Resolution, they executed almost as soon as they had formed it. In his last Agonies the Steward earnestly desired to speak with the Count and Countess, his good Master and Mistress, in order to discover to them a very great Prejudice he had done them. This Desire of his, was communicated to them both; but as they imagined it might relate to some Fraud in the Management of their Affairs, they were therefore afraid of disturbing him in his dying Moments, which determined them not to see him. The Steward died in 1648, and the Marquis *de Maixant*, and the Marchioness *de Bouille*, began to hope that all was over.

But they were soon convinced of their Mistake, for the odd things the Steward had let drop, during his Illness, struck the Minds of so many People, and recalled such a number of Passages to their Remembrance, that of a sudden, it came to be whispered all over the Country, that the Countess *de St. Geran* had certainly had a Child; but that by some Means or other, it had been spirited away. Nay, such a Degree did this Notion prevail, that it came at last to the Count and Countess's Ears, who began to grow very uneasy, and formed projects to themselves to have this Matter strictly examined. All this time the young Man remained in their House, and in their Service, in the Quality of their Page; but at the same time, much Care was taken of his Education as if he had been already declared their Son. Though yet, nothing of this part of the Story had so much as touched their Imaginations.

While this Affair ran in the Count and Countess's Head, and they were casting about how to bring this Matter into a proper Light for an Examination, an Accident drew them out of their Embarrassment; for going to drink the Waters at *Vicbi*, the Countess one day surprized the Marchioness *Bouille* in a close Conference with her Midwife, who lived at that Place.

The Sight moved her so much, that she could not help interrupting of them, and asking them what they were talking about so earnestly. This good Woman, answered the Marchioness, was praising my Brother for not looking upon her with an evil Eye: and why, says the Countess to her Midwife, should you suspect that my Husband is displeased with you? I doubted, replied she, in great Confusion, whether he might not be angry with me for what happened when you lay in. This dark Expression raised the Countess's Indignation, though she had Prudence enough to forbear speaking; her Silence however did not hinder the Marchioness from guessing at what passed within, and the Consciousness of her own Guilt, made her so uneasy in the Presence of her Brother and Sister, that she took a sudden Resolution of retiring to her own Seat which she put in execution without the Formality of taking Leave. This alarmed the Family, the Count and Countess reasoned upon it between themselves; they began to wish that the Midwife was in the Hands of Justice, but they were sensible at the same time, that their Suspicions were not Evidence sufficient to bring her within the reach of the Law. Upon this they consulted their Mother, who was of Opinion they should first talk to the Midwife themselves; they did so and found her Answers so Dark, so Ambiguous

and so Contradictory, that they saw plainly, she was in some measure Guilty. Upon this they applied themselves to the Deputy Steward of the Jurisdiction in which they lived, and had the Midwife arrested, and brought before him, in order to see what could be obtained in the way of a judicial Examination.

As soon as she was brought before the Judge, she readily confessed that the Countess had been delivered, but that it was of a dead female Child; and that she had buried it under a Stone Step at the Gate of the lower Court: The Judge, accompanied by a Physician and a Surgeon, went thither, and examined carefully, dug in several places, but all to no purpose. The Count then sent to acquaint his Mother with what had passed, and to take her Advice, which was, that they should proceed with the utmost Severity. A Process upon this was begun in all the Forms. On the second Interrogation the old Woman insisted, that the Countess was not brought to bed at all; in the third, that she was brought to bed of a Mole; in the fourth, that she was brought to bed of a Son, and that the Steward had carried him away in a Basket; on the fifth, which was in open Court, she declared roundly, that her former Confessions had been extorted, and that in fact the Countess never had a Child at all. To account for all this, the Reader is to know, that as soon as the Midwife was imprisoned, she sent her Son to the Marchioness *de Bouille*, to inform her of the Situation in which her Affairs stood, and to assure her, that in all her Examinations she had never let slip any thing that could affect her: this was strictly true, and gave the Marchioness great Consolation; insomuch, that she instantly provided her with

with a Lawyer, and sent her considerable Supplies of Money. But in the mean time the Marchioness had some other troublesome People to deal with ; these were the Countess's Women, who were privy to the whole Affair, and whom, for that reason, the Marchioness had taken into her Service, and for their insupportable Insolence had been afterwards obliged to turn them away. When the thing began however to make such a Noise, she was forced to take them again ; and to make sure of them, she married off one, and kept the other for her Woman. In the mean time so many concurrent Circumstances appeared against the Midwife, that she was convicted in the inferior Court, and sentenced to be hanged. This at first struck the Marchioness with Amazement, but recovering her Spirits by degrees, she engaged the Midwife to appeal, who was thereupon sent Prisoner to *Paris*, where the Marchioness still continued to supply her with Money, and to procure her the best Assistance the Law could afford.

The Count *de St. Geran*, in the mean time, had acquired some new Lights into this matter, and having obtained a Commission to examine Witnesses in the Country, procured a distinct Detail of his Steward's Journey with his Son, when he carried away the Child, supported by the concurrent Testimonies of the several Persons who had suckled it upon the Road, the Woman with whom it was first put to nurse, and several other Witnesses. As many of these Proofs, and especially those upon which the Midwife was convicted, bore very hard upon the Marchioness *de Bouille* ; nothing but the Tenderness which her Brother had for her, prevented her sharing the same Fate with her Accomplice.

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In escaping this Part of her Punishment she met with another ; for stirring about, she found such Evidence daily breaking out, all the Witnesses agreeing in the Person of the Child, for these substantial Reasons, that he had very fair Hair, large blue Eyes, and his Skull depressed by the Attempt the Midwife made to murder him ; which struck the Marchioness so to the Heart, that she fell suddenly sick, and died after a few Days Illness. But though her Malady was violent enough to destroy her Body, yet it had no manner of effect upon her Mind, for she died as she had lived, obstinately secret, and even with Professions of her Innocency, which, as we shall hereafter see, had very bad Effects ; and, but for the Perseverance of the Countess *de St. Geran*, who now saw plainly into the whole Affair, might have stifled the Discovery, notwithstanding it had already gone so far.

A little after the Death of the Marchioness, the Midwife expired in Prison ; but she died, as the Marchioness did, hardened to the last Gasps, notwithstanding that a little before her last Interrogation she had caused a Letter to be written to the Countess of *St. Geran*, in which she recounted, step by step, the whole Affair, and had set her Mark to it, by signing it with a Cross, by which Letter most of the Witnesses were found, who deposed to the Identity of the Child. Neither did this Obstinacy of hers at all weaken the Force of the Evidence she had before given, since, after her Death, her Son divulged the whole Secret of her Conduct, by deposing, that he went between her and the Marchioness *de Guille*, who had supported her in her Appeal ; and also, that his Mother had frequently told him every Circumstance of the Affair, so far

as she was concerned therein, or it had been communicated to her; by which Means, the Grocer, who had advanced Money to *la Pigoreau*, and the Persons who had been Gossips, when the Child was christned were discovered. Upon the very Neck of this, broke out another sort of Evidence, of which hitherto there had not been the least Suspicion; and which yet was as convincing as any that had appeared.

The Marquis *de St. Maixant* had been seized and sent to Prison within a Year or two after he had been concerned in this Affair. He had one *Berger* for his Page, to whom he communicated all his Secrets, and amongst the rest this, but without mentioning Names. He said, that he knew a Grandson of a Marshal of *France*, who was bred up in the House of his Father and Mother without their knowing it; and that his Parents often deplored the loss of an Heir, while their Son was before their Eyes. *Berger*, like a faithful Domestic, advised him to discover it; which he promised to do, but put it off from time to time, though he sent him to see the young Gentleman at the House of *la Pigoreau*, whom he visited upon a Supposition that she was his Mother. A little after the Death of the Marchioness *de Bouille*, the Marquis *de St. Maixant* fell extremely ill, and when he found himself dying, he declared he had a Secret of great Importance to disclose, to the Count and Countess of *St. Geran*, but before they could be sent for, he was seized with the Agonies of Death, and expired with all the Marks of sincere Penitence. *Berger* supplied, however, that Evidence which his Master should have given, by deposing positively to the Person of the young Count, whom his Master had shewn him at the House of *la*

Pigoreau.

Pigoreau, having been permitted to go thither by the Jaylor. The Matter seemed now in a manner out of Doubt; when a new Scene opened, a fresh Attempt was made to defeat all these Discoveries, by two young Ladies; whose Views of Interest cancelled all regard to Justice, as well as all the Ties of Blood and natural Affection.

It has been already shewn, that the Mother of the Countess *de St. Geran*, had a Daughter by the Count's Father, the Marshall *de St. Geran*; who was scarce fourteen when the Countess *de St. Geran* was brought to bed; who was about her at that time, and who had felt the Child stir in her Body after her fall. This young Lady was now married to the Duke *de Ventadour*, and in conjunction with the Daughter of the Marchioness *de Bouille*, who was married to the Count *du Lude*, undertook to dispute the Succession of this young Gentleman, notwithstanding the strong Proofs that had appeared; and notwithstanding that the Marshalls *de St. Geran*, who was the Dutchess's Mother, was perfectly satisfied that he was her Grand-Child. In order to do this effectually, they not only supported *la Pigoreau*, now under a Prosecution, with Money, but also engaged her to commence a civil Action against the Count and Countess *de St. Geran*, in order to reclaim the young Man as her Son. By this Means the whole Affair came before the Parliament of *Paris*; where it was long agitated with great Heat on both Sides; the Ladies having made themselves Parties to the Suit, pretending at the same time, that it was not out of Interest, but out of pure Concern for the Interest of a noble Family; and to prevent its Titles from being born by a supposititious Child. But all this added very little to their Advantage; notwithstanding

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standing that, they went so far, as to carry *la Pigoreau* in their own Coach, to the several Hearings, as a Testimony of their being convinced of the Truth of what they pretended. For upon a strict Examination of all the Witnesses, and the Countess *de Montabilan* deposing, that the Mother of *la Pigoreau* had told her the whole Story of the carrying off the Child; the Parliament on the 28th of *August* pronounced a Decree, by which the pretended Mother was to have been taken into Custody; upon which, she thought proper to withdraw into some Foreign Country, and was never heard of more.

While things were in this Situation, the Count *de St. Geran* going down to his Castle, in order to bring up the Witnesses, received advice that the King and Queen (*Lewis XIII.* and *Mary de Medicis*) were to pass by his Seat, in their Road from *Lyons* to *Paris*; upon which, he made the best Dispositions possible for their Reception; and on their Arrival presented to them his Son, who was very graciously received; but the Pains the Count was at, and the Concern he was under about the Ceremonial of the King's Reception, threw him, soon after their Majesties were gone, into a Fever, of which, in eight Days time, he died, on the 31st of *January* 1659. By his Will he acknowledged his Son, recommended to his Executors the carrying on the Cause with the utmost Vigour. The Countess undertook the Guardianship of her Son; and on the other hand the Duchess *de Ventadour*, and the Countess *de Lude*, disputed her Tutelage, and his Succession; and as they had great Interest at Court, and the Count *de St. Geran* was now dead, they found Ways and Means to put off the Trial from one time to another, for two or three Years; till a

last, the Countess *de St. Geran* having applied to the King in Council, he by his Arret, dated the 9th of April 1661, referred the Cause back to the Parliament, together with the cross Causes by the Ladies *de Ventadour* and *du Lude*. Upon this Arret of Reference, the Affair came on to be heard before the Parliament; but still met with so many Obstructions from the Arts of the Lawyers, who were in hopes, that pending the Suit, the Countess might be snatched away: it was so long deferred by their Artifices, I say, that in spite of the most pressing Solicitations, no final Decision could be had in less than five Years more; so that the young Man was now Twenty-five compleat, and yet could scarce be said to know, with certainty, his Father or his Mother.

On the 5th of June 1666, the Parliament decreed, that the Sentences by the inferior Judges, who had granted the Administration of the Estate of the late Count *de St. Geran* to his Sister and Niece, should be void; and that the Tutelage granted to the Countess *de St. Geran* of her Son, should be confirmed; and the Appeals therefrom, by the Ladies before-mentioned, dissolved, and dismissed. That with respect to the Bill, brought by the late *Claudius de la Guiche*, and *Susanna de Longuanay*, of the 12th of August 1658, it is Decreed, That the interlocutory Judgment be made final, in order to maintain and support *Bernard de la Guiche*, as the Natural and Lawful Son of *Claudius de la Guiche*, and *Susanna de Longuanay*, in the Possession and Enjoyment of the Name and Arms of the Family of *de la Guiche*; together with the Estates and Inheritance left him by his Father; with a Prohibition to the Ladies before-mentioned, to trouble or disturb him: And as to the Cross-Bills of the

Ladies of the 4th of *June*, 1664, the 4th of *August*, 1665, the 6th of *January*, 10th of *February*, 12th of *March*, 15th of *April*, and 2d of *June*, 1666 ; their Demands are rejected, and their Bills dismissed with Costs. And farther, *la Pigoreau* is declared convicted, and attainted, and condemned to be hanged and strangled on a Gallows, in the Place of the *Greve*, in case she can be apprehended ; and if not, in Effigy, and all her Goods and Effects to be confiscated, out of which 800 Livres are to be applied to purchase Bread for the Prisoners in the common Jayl.

Such was the Decision of this great Cause, so long laboured and so vigorously pursued on all sides, and with so great difficulty did the Father and Mother of this young Nobleman prevail, in having a legal Determination of what they knew to be an indubitable Fact ; and so narrow an Escape had *Bernard de la Guiche* from being treated as an Impostor, after he had been acknowledged by those whose proper Business it was to have detected him, if he had been really such. I must confess, I think I have used the Word *Detected* improperly ; for it is self-evident in this whole Affair, that the Child had no hand in it whatsoever ; nor is it possible to assign any probable Reason, why the Count and Countess *de St. Geran* should act as they did, but from the Warmth of that parental Affection which is infused by Nature. It is likewise impossible to conceive, how such a Number of concurrent Evidences should arise, but from a Multitude of concurring Facts ; that most august Judiciary therefore which decided in this Cause, decided from such Lights as nothing but Truth could reflect : And as it is in itself one of the most

rious and most extraordinary Stories that is per-
 haps any where to be met with, so I will venture
 to lay it down, that there never was a Case in
 which Circumstances made the thing more clear.
 For on the one hand, the Motives of the two
 great Criminals, the Marchioness *de Bouille* and
 the Marquis *de St. Maixant*, were plainly Avarice
 and Ambition; their Accomplices were all cor-
 rupted in the Act by Promises or Money, and
 in denying it, by the Terror of Punishment and
 the Prospect of escaping. The Duchess *de Ven-*
tadour, and the Countess *du Lude*, were stimu-
 lated by different Passions; the former by Inte-
 rest and Vanity, since, if she had carried her
 point, she must have been considered as the Hei-
 ress of her Family; the latter by Resentment,
 her Mother's Reputation being attacked in the
 strongest Terms. As to *la Pigoreau*, she appears
 to have been a Woman governed absolutely by
 the low Notion of getting Money at any rate;
 and her Manner of abandoning the Child when
 she brought him to his supposed Uncle, suffici-
 ently proves that she was not his Mother. But
 no Motives of this sort can be assigned for the
 Procedure of the Count and Countess; they
 could have nothing in view, but recovering their
 Son: Nor can we conceive that they could pos-
 sibly have supported their Spirits through so long
 and arduous a Contest, but from a firm Persua-
 sion that they were doing Justice to their own
 Issue. Besides, if there had been any thing dark
 or dubious, if there had been any other Obscu-
 rity in this Cause, than what the Lust of Money
 would induce Lawyers to raise about the most self-
 evident Proposition in the World, we can never
 conceive, that against such a Weight of Interest,
 after such strict Examination, after such mature
 Confi-

Consideration, the Parliament of *Paris* should decide in favour of a young Man, who had nothing to plead for him but the Tenderneſs of a Widow, and his own undeſerved Miſfortunes.

I come now to the laſt Relation, with which I ſhall trouble the Reader upon this occaſion ; and as I began, ſo I ſhall end with a domeſtic Inſtance : An Inſtance from which it will appear, that even in this free Country of *England*, where our Laws and Liberties are ſo well ſecured, Right and Innocence have ſometimes given way to fraudulent Intrigues and the Weight of Power.

There are certain Qualities inherent to, or hereditary in ſome Families, as we find long ago obſerved, both in *Greece* and *Rome*, and perhaps there have been as ſtrong Inſtances of this in *England*, as in any other Country. All who are acquainted with our Hiſtory know how much we ſuffered under certain Reigns, from the deep Reach, deluſive Arts, and boundleſs Ambition of the *Dudleys*. They were the Peſt and Bane of this Nation for a Century together. They brought on the Reign of *Henry VII.* the Impu- tation of Oppreſſion ; the Stain of Cruelty on that of *Henry the VIIIth*, the Blot of unnatural Envy on that of *Edward VI.* and of *Ma- chiavellian* Policy upon the glorious Govern- ment of *Queen Elizabeth*. The firſt great Maſter of this Family was Sir *Edmond Dudley*, who roſe to the higheſt Honours of the long Robe under King *Henry VII.* and of all the Miniſters that this Kingdom ever produced, had the cleareſt Head, and the moſt comprehensive Genius ; he ſaw at once not only the utmoſt Penny that might be extorted from the People, but diſtinguiſhed alſo every Method of Taxation with Sagacity equal to that of any modern Miniſter notwith

notwithstanding the mighty Advantages derived to them from Experience. This great Man fell a Sacrifice in the Beginning of the next Reign, to *Henry the VIIIth's* Desire of Popularity ; at least so our Historians say, though I suspect him rather to have been the Victim of the new Ministers Envy : for it is a Rule among the Great to remove, when it is in their power, Men of superior Abilities, such as this great Instrument of Oppression was known to be.

But though *Henry VIII.* suffered the Father to die on a Scaffold, he took particular Notice of the Son, whom he suffered to possess a large Estate he might have seized, and sent him to *Italy* to improve that Education he had already receiv'd at home. The young Sir *John Dudley* had Abilities equal to his Father's, for greater there could not be ; and his Voyage to *Italy* inspired him with such Principles, as enabled him to exert his Abilities in a manner unknown to this Nation before this Time : for though we had experienced ambitious, enterprizing, and cunning Ministers ; yet such a thorough-paced Politician, as Sir *John Dudley* proved, had never yet been seen. As his Master was a very martial Prince, so this Favourite's first Turn was to Arms, and in that Profession he acquired considerable Reputation, both by Land and Sea. He studied chiefly his Master's Temper, and secured himself through all the Changes of that boisterous Reign, by dexterously flattering the King's Passions, and by being always on his Side, and in his private Schemes, maintained himself, in sight of the Envy and Hatred of his Ministers ; which, whoever considers the Pride of *Wolfey*, and the Power of *Cromwell*, must look upon with Astonishment. He derived from his Mother some kind

kind of Pretension to the Title of Viscount *Lisle*, and the King's Affection for him brought him to consider that Pretension as a Right, so that he was raised to this, as to an hereditary Dignity. He did not remain long in that Situation, which perhaps would have satisfied any other Man's Ambition; but, as our Histories shew at large, arrived in time at the superior Honours of Earl of *Warwick*, and Duke of *Northumberland*; together with these high Titles he enjoyed also some of the greatest and most profitable Employments in the Kingdom; for he was made Lord High Admiral of *England* for Life, afterwards Lord High Chamberlain, then Earl Marshal, and last of all Lord Warden of the Northern Marches.

But while he was thus rising to the noblest Honours, and highest Preferments, he took care to augment his paternal Estate, which was very great, by Grants from the Crown, and by various other Methods, till he had swoln it to such a Height, as that there were few so great in this Kingdom. In the midst of all this Happiness there was one thing galled him: He knew that in spite of all his Titles, and notwithstanding the high Rank he held, the common People had a notion that he was the *Grandson* of a *Tinker*; and though he had Genealogists and Heralds enough at his command to have traced his Descent through a Line of Emperors up to *Adam*, yet could not all their Assurances give him ease. In proportion as he grew in Power and Magnificence, grew also the Rage of popular Envy; and the more noble the King's Favour, and his own Acquirements made him appear at Court, the more firmly were the People persuaded that he was (to make use of their own coarse Language) the

Sparrow

Spawn of a Tinker's Trull. How to wipe out this Stain he knew not, and to bear it his great Spirit was unable; for it is a Foible that always attends Ambition, to feel that most which can hurt it least, I mean *vulgar Opinion*.

At last he fell upon a Project, that though in itself the most likely to give the highest Credit to this ill-devised Tale, yet to him appeared the sole means of refuting it effectually. Such miserable Judges are even the ablest Men, when left to decide their own Causes by the Lights which their Prejudices exhibit! the Project he fell upon was this: There was a fine old Castle in *Warwickshire*, the Grandeur of which, in spite of the Injuries of Time, remains to the present Age, called *Dudley*, which was then the Seat of *John Sutton*, Baron of *Dudley*, who married the Daughter of *Thomas Grey*, Marquis of *Dorset*. This *John Lord Dudley* was a very weak Man, though a Descendant of an antient and noble Family: Our Statesman flattered himself, that if he could once get into Possession of this old Castle he might pass for the true Representative of its illustrious Owners, and be considered by the People as reviving the Glory of an old Family, which had been for some time eclipsed. How he could thus impose upon himself, and believe that the very Generation who had seen the old Lords of *Dudley*, and the present, in possession of that Castle and Honour, should take him for its Heir, merely from his getting hold of it, is not readily to be apprehended. But I presume his true Intention might have been to re-edify and embellish this Castle with numerous Coats of Arms, wherein the antient Line of *Sutton* should be so blended with his Maternal Ancestors, as to make that current with Posterity, which that Age could not credit; and this

he might the more easily imagine, because the Populace are but indifferent Heralds, and knew well enough how to manage those who were better versed in such kind of Things. At least the Probability of this Conjecture, and the Course of his future Proceeding, which were exactly such as we have described it, make it very likely that this was his true Design. For such Coats of Arms are yet visible on the new Buildings which he added to the Castle of *Dudley*, and remain as so many authentick Testimonies of the Weakness and Vanity of this great Man, who could not enjoy the Splendour of so vast a Fortune without adding thereto an Opinion that some of his Ancestors had been as great as himself.

It happened luckily enough for his Scheme, that *John Sutton* Lord *Dudley* was not only a very weak but a very extravagant Man, and though he derived from his Progenitors a very considerable Estate, yet his Love to the fashionable Hospitality of those Times, and his being not so well qualified to look into the Management of his Stewards, brought him frequently into such Circumstances as made him unable to support that Jollity and Merriment which was his principal Happiness. To get over these Difficulties, and to keep himself in Good-humour, he had recourse to a sort of Folks numerous in those days, and not altogether worn out in ours; I mean Usurers and Money-Brokers, who, upon strong Securities, and at a high Interest, lent him pretty large Sums, till at last he was so entangled that he neither knew how to live after his former manner, nor to find any Pledges for what might be sufficient to procure him a bare Subsistence, having nothing but his House and Parks left. These Usurers and Money-Brokers were the Instruments of our great Statesman

Statesman, who by their Assistance foreclosed the poor Lord, and excluded him totally from his Inheritance ; obliging him to sign whatever Deeds and Conveyances that crafty Lawyers of the politick, and potent Earl of *Warwick* thought proper to devise.

The long wish'd-for Prize of *Dudley-Castle*, with all the Manors and Estates belonging to it being thus in his Possession ; no Pains, no Expence was spared in repairing and beautifying it, or to give such a Turn to those Decorations as might engage succeeding Generations to believe it had been for many Centuries the Seat of the Duke of *Northumberland's* Family ; to colour which, such a Genealogy was drawn, as to this day it remains doubtful how far it may be true or false. But thus much is very certain, that while so much care was taken of his ancient Seat, the true Lord *Dudley* had scarce a Hole wherein to hide his Head, but wandered up and down the Country, getting a Dinner now at one Friend's House, and then at another, under the whimsical Title of Lord *Quondam* ; for his Oppressor, together with his Estate, had seized his Barony, and not satisfied with so many Honours of his own, would needs sit in Parliament as Baron of *Dudley*.

In the deep Distress of poor *Sutton*, Lord *Dudley*, or Lord *Quondam*, which you will, a Park-keeper he had provided for in his junior Years took him in, and sustained him, while to the gay World he was so utterly lost that nobody almost remembred him. In the midst of his Wealth and Luxury the mighty Duke of *Northumberland* deign'd not the least notice of him, little thinking how near the newly-repaired Palace was returning to its old Owner, with a large Interest for the short time it had been withheld.

held ; his Eyes still look'd forward ; his Appetite was still craving. Under the good King *Edward* he had all the Power, without the Title of Sovereignty, of which a greater Instance there could not be, than this excluding the unfortunate Lord *Quondam* from his old Seat, large Fortune, and hereditary Honour ; yet grasping still more, he is thought to have procured by some *Italian Arts* that excellent young Prince to be removed, in order to place the Crown on the Head of Lady *Jane Grey*, whom he had lately wedded to his Son Lord *Guilford Dudley* ; and thus he would at once have been the Father-in-Law of a Queen, and perhaps in a fair way (if that was his Design) to be himself a King.

But the String of his Felicity was now at its full Stretch, and with his Attempt to charge it with still greater Weight broke at once ; for, missing of his Scheme to get the Princess *Mary* into his hands, she took upon her the Style and State of Queen, and in a few days brought the proud Duke of *Northumberland* into such Difficulties and Distress, that falling into despair, he surrender'd himself Prisoner, and soon after shared the Fate of his Father by losing his Head upon a Scaffold ; then it was that the poor Lord *Quondam* was drawn out of Obscurity, and known again by his old Title of Lord *Dudley*, instead of being laugh'd at by the many, and pitied by a very few, which had been his Case for many Years. Instead of being call'd my Lord in jest and flouted by every rude Fellow upon whom they were pleas'd to stile his left-handed Quality he was now become as good a Peer as the best, and as such summon'd to Parliament in the first of Queen *Mary*. But he did not live long to enjoy this agreeable Change of Fortune ; but dying at his Lodgings in *Old Palace-Yard*, he

was buried at the Parish Church of *St. Margaret, Westminster*.

But the Memory of his Misfortunes and of the Wrongs done him by this haughty Duke, were not buried with him; for the Queen in the second Year of her Reign bestow'd upon *Edward Lord Dudley* his Son many fine Manors in *Warwickshire* and *Staffordshire*, which came to the Crown through the Forfeiture of the Duke of *Northumberland*; and on the last Day of the next Year, in consideration of his Marriage with the Daughter of the Lord *Chandois*, Maid of Honour to her Majesty, King *Philip* and Queen *Mary* were pleased to grant him and his Heirs Male, lawfully begotten upon the said *Catharine Bridges*, and for default of such Issue, to the right Heirs of the said *Edward*, all those Lordships of *Sedgley*, *Hymley*, and *Swynford*, with the Parks of *Etingshall*, *Sedgley* and *Hymley*; the Hays, Forests and Chaces of *Ashwood* and *Chaspell*, and all the Lands called *Willingesworth* in *Sedgley*; with divers Lands and Tenements in *Hymley*, *Womburne*, and *Swynden* in *Com' Staff*. As also by other Letters Patent, the whole Castle of *Dudley*, the Park called the *Conigre*, the Park called the *Old Park* of *Dudley*, and divers Messuages and Lands lying in *Dudley*, *Nowley*, and *Seagley*, in *Com' Staff*. and to the Heirs Male of their two Bodies lawfully begotten; all which came to the Crown by the Forfeiture of the same Duke of *Northumberland*.

Such were the mighty Changes that a few Years brought forth; but put the Case that Lord *Quondam* had died in Obscurity, and there had not been any Interval between the Grandeur of the Duke of *Northumberland*, and his potent Sons, the Earls of *Warwick* and *Leicester*; or suppose Lord *Dudley's* Son had continued a Minor till the

the Days of Queen *Elizabeth*, he would then, if he had not submitted quietly to his Fate, been treated with the opprobrious Names of Pretender and Impostor; and might have seen his antient Inheritance, of *Dudley-Castle*, boasted of by those who had no better Title to it than Fraud and Force could afford. That all this did not happen was owing to mere Accident; to speak like a Man of the World, or in the Language of a Christian, to the Disposition of Providence; but if it had, there would have been nothing in it stranger or more wonderful than this most Potent Duke's assuming the Arms, Title, and Dignity of an English Peer, in the Life-time of the real Owner. This Story is just enough known to our Genealogists and Antiquaries, to bear me out in relating it; but the generality of the World know nothing of it, and I dare say there are numbers of great Lawyers, who from a bare stating of the Facts, without mention of Names or Authorities, would pronounce it impossible so true it is, that Possession is eleven Points in the Law, or rather eleven Points with the Lawyers, who have a very indifferent Opinion of Right and Title, if attended with Obscurity and Want, and opposed to Affluence and Power; but Justice which considers not either Accidents or Circumstances, frequently turns the Tables, as in this Case, and by ways wholly her own, restores every Man his Mare again.

There are none of these Relations, but what are founded upon the best Authority; and if we take them together, we must allow that they contain Circumstances, in every respect, as surprising, if not more so, than the Story which first put us upon collecting them; and therefore they sufficiently establish this Proposition, that nothing of a like nature ought, from its Oddness or Singularity

then, For what can be more strange than *Richard Plantagenet's* living and dying in such Obscurity? what more contrary to the ordinary Course of things, than *Mary Cognol's* Struggle for the Proof of her Legitimacy, against her own Mother, who was not to be at all dishonoured by owning her? what more striking, and yet more easy and natural, than the change of the young Lord at Nurse? what more astonishing than the Practice used to defeat the Succession of the young Count *de St. Geran*, if we except his being restored to that Succession in spite of the Artifices of his Enemies, the Subterfuges of the Lawyers, and the great Quality and mighty Interest of his Opponents? What approaches nearer to the Case now talk'd of, than the exclusion of the Baron of *Dudley*, even in his Life-time; which Peerage however, continues still in his Family?

These were each of them in their beginning, I mean in their being first disclosed to the World, liable to great Exceptions; and nothing but that Light of Evidence, which always waits upon Truth, could have brought them into that Situation, in which we now behold them. If in such Cases, the declaring a thing to be idle, monstrous, or romantick, had been sufficient, we had never been entertained with so many extraordinary Instances of Prudence, Equity, and Justice. It has been always, and very justly, esteemed the highest Glory of great Judicatures, to enquire strictly, to hear with Patience, and to determine without Respect of Persons; and indeed it is the Interest of Mankind in general, to support the Reputation of such Tribunals; for if warm Declamations, and general Surmises of the Darkness and Intricacy of Causes, could procure perpetual Injunctions, it would give the greatest

greatest Encouragement to Fraud, and Villany, and leave oppressed Innocence without Resource.

Upon the whole therefore, I think no honest Man, after reading this Treatise, can lay his Hand upon his Heart, and say, such a Transaction is strange and improbable; and therefore it is not worth while to make any Enquiry about it. We live in an Age in which Avarice, Ambition, and the Thirst of possessing what legally belongs to another, prevail as strongly as ever they did, since the World began; and if, in support of these, we should introduce a lazy Listlessness of examining what is represented to us as perplexed and obscure, a cowardly Dread of provoking the Rich and Powerful, who perhaps, are become so by iniquitous Means; a political Apprehension of stirring fresh Suits, by a Decision against a present Possessor; there will follow such Consequences as must, and that in no long time neither, unsettle all Order, overturn all Succession, and absolutely destroy the Peace and Safety of Society. Upon this Principle it must appear absolutely necessary to discourage that kind of Scepticism, which is so prevalent in the World, unless we will resolve to sacrifice the Rights of living Persons, and the Security of our Posterity, to a chimerical Fear of attacking outward Appearances; and examining the Pretensions of Persons in low Circumstances, who expose themselves to the greatest Dangers from a laudable Desire of obtaining Justice; a Desire we never can extinguish in them, but to the hazard of our selves; for he who countenances another's Wrong, deprives himself of all Right to redress, when he comes to be injured in his Turn.